

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Kentucky [Mrs. NORTHUP] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. NORTHUP led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ONE MORE SPECIAL INTEREST RIP-OFF

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Question: How many Federal directors does it take to run the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center? Answer: Nine.

Now, if this sounds like a bad joke, it is, and once again the joke is on the American taxpayer, because this sheep center is going to cost American taxpayers at least \$20 million, maybe \$50 million, and it is run by the very industries that it benefits.

Now, what is it supposed to do? Typical mumbo-jumbo. Listen: Promote strategic development activities and collaborative efforts; to maximize the impact of Federal assistance to strengthen and enhance the production and marketing; infrastructure development and on and on. Well, it gets my goat, that is for sure.

This is one more special interest rip-off that uses taxpayer dollars to do what corporate America should do for itself, and so the taxpayers keep getting fleeced.

Mr. Speaker, I am introducing a bill to eliminate this bad program. Let us end this ridiculous bit of sheer nonsense.

AMERICA'S UNINSURED CHILDREN

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Mother's Day is fast approaching and there has been no committee action to date on passing legislation to cover America's uninsured children. Last week, the House Committee on Appropriations failed to pass an amendment to fully meet the President's funding request for the Women, Infants, and Children's Program.

According to the nonpartisan Center on Budget and Public Priorities, 180,000 participants will be cut off from this vital nutrition program by this September as a result of Republican ac-

tions. Even though the General Accounting Office has reported that each dollar invested in the prenatal component of WIC averts over \$3.5 of Medicaid and other spending, Republicans felt that this prevention program did not warrant their full support.

Last week's vote on the Committee on Appropriations sends the wrong message to the American people. We should be working to ensure that our children are healthy and expand insurance options instead of rejecting proven preventive programs. Maybe the Republican leaders will surprise us by passing children's health care legislation through the committee process before Mother's Day. Democrats are waiting for Republican leaders to join us in helping our Nation's children.

CREATING A BETTER AMERICA

(Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, now is the time for Congress to focus on our agenda. That agenda is aimed quite simply at creating a better America for ourselves and our children, creating a better tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what generations of Americans have done for the past 200 years. Today, however, we must recognize two obstacles to the American success story. The first is the juvenile justice system that is broken. The second is a legal system that actually threatens volunteerism with absurd lawsuits.

Let us think about, Mr. Speaker, kids being safe, where every mother expects her government to provide a minimum of security for her children. As for the second, volunteerism, helping our kids in Little League, helping the poor and the elderly, volunteering our time at our churches, volunteerism is as American as apple pie.

But lawsuits and manipulation of the legal system threaten these activities everywhere. Let us start by passing reform of the juvenile justice system and volunteer protection legislation now.

HARSH NEW WELFARE LAW

(Mr. GUTIERREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, in 94 days the new welfare law will rip apart the social safety net for hundreds of thousands of elderly, disabled, and vulnerable legal immigrants. But today, consider one such immigrant, just one, a woman in my district in Chicago.

Sophia is a 91-year-old Polish immigrant. She is in poor health and has little means of support besides her supplemental Social Security. During World War II, Sophia, then still in Poland, hid as many as a dozen Jews in her home, saved them from certain death at the hands of the Nazis.

Because of her compassion and courage, Sophia received a unique distinc-

tion from the Government of Israel. She received and was recognized as a righteous person because she had given others the chance to survive. Now Sophia has received a notice from our Government telling her that she is unworthy of Federal assistance, cutting off her only means of survival.

We have 94 days to restore benefits to legal immigrants like Sophia, to restore a sense of fairness and logic to the welfare debate, to restore the principles of compassion and justice. America should be proud to have immigrants like Sophia and ashamed of our harsh new welfare law.

COMMONSENSE FOREIGN POLICY

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, America gives billions to Russia. With American cash, Russia builds missiles. Russia then sells those missiles to China, and China, who gets about \$45 billion in trade giveaways from Uncle Sam, then sells those Russian-made missiles to Iran.

Now, Iran, with those Russian made missiles sold to them by China, threatens the Mideast. So Uncle Sam, who is concerned about Iran threatening the Mideast because of those Russian-made missiles sold to them by China that were financed by American cash, sends more troops and sends more dollars. Beam me up.

Now, if that is not enough to tax your rubles, check this out. Boris just signed a deal with those Chinese dictators that makes NATO look like the neighborhood crime watch.

Mr. Speaker, this is not foreign policy. This is foreign stupidity. I think a little common sense would go a lot further than all of these think tank experts and their advice.

WE MUST SAVE MEDICARE

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I may sound like a broken record, but just 1 year ago I stood here in this well and said we must save Medicare. I said we cannot let this program that helps so many senior citizens in our country go belly up. Yet as much as many things change, they sure seem to stay the same.

Medicare is still on the road to ruin and now we only have 4 years, 4 years before it is bankrupt. In fact, because of the President's inaction, it is now 2001. At that time Medicare will be \$23.4 billion in the hole.

Perhaps the President may have had too much on his mind with all of those fundraising distractions last year. But now the campaign is over, and it is time to worry about our seniors who need a healthy Medicare to survive.